

PART II:
APSR Report FY 2005

**(9) Chafee Foster Care Independence
Program**

Children's Administration
Department of Social and Health Services

Annual Progress and Services Report FY 2005 Chaffee Foster Care Independence Program

<p>Section 477 (b)(2) Lead Agency</p>	<p>In Washington State, the Department of Social and Health Services, Children's Administration (CA) administers, supervises and oversees the Title IV-E program and the Chaffee Foster Care Independence Program (CFCIP). CA has continued efforts to implement and improve the Chaffee Independent Living Program. Community collaboration continues to be a guiding force in our work with adolescents and their caregivers. Contact information for the CA Program Manager is as follows:</p>
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<p>Report Overview</p>	<p>The first years of Chaffee implementation have been primarily concerned with developing the infrastructure for services and making sure social service workers, youth, and other stakeholders are aware of resources available, and in evaluating the status of youth transitioning from state care. Children's Administration has grown from having programs scattered across the state to having only a few coverage gaps. CA has expanded from serving only youth between 16 and 18 to serving youth and young adults between 13 and 23. CA has made promising inroads with systems integration to improve educational, housing, and employment outcomes.</p>
<p>Eligibility</p>	<p>Eligibility for the Chaffee Program</p> <p>Eligibility for the Chaffee programs is as follows:</p> <p>I. Independent Living Services (ILS)</p> <p>Children ages 13 and 14 who are likely to remain in foster care until age 18 are eligible for regionally based tutoring programs if they are dependent and in the legal custody of CA or in Tribal out-of-home care.</p> <p>Youth ages 15 to 18, dependent and in the legal custody of CA or in Tribal out-of-home care are eligible for any contracted independent living program.</p> <p>Youth previously eligible for ILS services for at least 6 months will retain their eligibility until their 18th birthday provided that one of the following events has occurred:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • youth was adopted on or after his/her 16th birthday; <i>or</i> • youth was placed in a third-party guardianship on or after his/her 16th birthday. <p>Youth not eligible for ILS are those who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • were adopted or placed under a third-party custody order before the age of 13 years old; <i>or</i> • who are under a voluntary placement agreement; <i>or</i> • who are under a CHINS petition.

II. Transitional Living Program

Youth are eligible for contracted transitional living programs from age 18 up to their 21st birthday if they:

- were eligible for ILS at their 18th birthday, *or*
- had an open CA case at the time they transitioned out of care, and had either been in out-of-home care for the previous six months prior to transition from care, *or* was a dependent and returned home within a year of reaching the age of majority (18).

III. Education and Training Vouchers

Youth must meet eligibility criteria for either Independent Living Services or Transitional Living Services, as well as, meet the following criteria in order to be eligible for Education and Training Voucher services:

- Youth must have completed high school or have a GED;
- Youth must either:
 - ⇒ be enrolled in a full-time or half-time post-secondary degree or certificate program; or
 - ⇒ be accepted for the next term.
- Students who have been receiving vouchers on their 21st birthday who are continuing to make acceptable progress towards graduation may continue to receive vouchers up to age 23.
- The student must be making acceptable progress toward graduation to continue receiving voucher assistance, as specified in the Washington State Education and Training Voucher (ETV) Services Guidebook.
- Post-secondary education and training schools which qualify for Education and Training Vouchers may include:
 - ⇒ A university (4 year college),
 - ⇒ Community college (2 year), or
 - ⇒ Vocational/trade school. The school must be accredited by a nationally accredited agency or by one of the six (6) regional accreditation boards, must have been granted pre-accreditation status, or offer a one-year state or nationally recognized certificate.

(1) Help youth make the transition to self sufficiency

The Washington State legislature established statutory authority to serve former foster youth ages 18 to 21 in June 2001. Services to former foster care youth are delivered via a contract amendment to the Independent Living contract. These contracted programs are known as ***Transitional Living Programs (TLPs)***. CA has TLP programs in every region of Washington State. Service delivery to former foster care youth between the ages of 18 and 21 continues to substantially increase since the establishment of the programs in 2001. These programs assist eligible youth in securing housing, employment and employment-related training and education, and

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maintaining self-sufficiency.

Thirty percent of the program funds were utilized for Room and Board. These funds were made available to eligible youth ages 18 to 21 on an individual basis. Transitional Living case managers worked with each youth to locate affordable housing, negotiated leases and made rent and utility payments. Rent subsidies were available as long as the youth was employed or seeking employment, or enrolled in an educational program.

Children's Administration's Independent Living programs continue to expand. The number of youth receiving Independent Living services between the ages of 16-18 has increased dramatically. CA is currently serving approximately 875 youth/young adults (not including Tribal youth). This is due mainly to greater outreach efforts both within Children's Administration and the community as a whole. CA also lowered the eligibility age for Independent Living services to 13 (for tutoring services only).

Children's Administration implemented the Ansell-Casey Life Skills Assessment tool as part of its service delivery to youth. Most case workers and service providers were trained on the utilization of this tool. Foster parents are also in the process of being trained. This tool enables CA to collect aggregate data indicating areas for program focus and to document pre and post outcomes for youth.

Washington State passed the Homeless Prevention, Protection and Engagement Act (HOPE) in 1999 which established the Responsible Living Skills Program (RLSP). RLS programs are designed for youth, ages 16 to 18 in the custody of the State or Tribe. The RLS programs continue to provide long-term housing, assessment, and life skills training to youth who are state-dependent, who are not returning to their families, and who have been unsuccessful in traditional foster care.

Children's Administration is in the process of developing policy regarding "No Wrong Door" multi-disciplinary staffings for all youth 6 months in advance of exiting the system. This is another effort to help make sure youth have the necessary skills and services needed to exit the system.

(2) Help youth receive the education, training and services to obtain employment

Educational stability and achievement for children in foster care is a critical aspect of ensuring a successful transition to self-sufficiency. During the 2003 Legislative Session, Substitute House Bill 1058 "an act relating to the educational attainment of children in foster care" was passed. As a result of this act the SHB 1058 Oversight Committee was created. This committee was instrumental in developing and promoting the following efforts during FY 2005 toward educational stability and achievement:

- School- based recruitment tool kits;
- Signing a memorandum of understanding (MOU) between CA and the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction;
- Identifying CA education leads in each region who are working on developing agreements with local school districts;

- 2004 Statewide Education Summit;
- Publishing an "Information Sharing Field Guide";
- Two school-based recruitment pilots;
- Developed CA/school district agreement protocols;
- Developed draft protocols and training for data sharing;
- Developed a variety of forms including the draft shelter-care order, parental authorization form, and the authorization and delegation form.

In the 2005 Legislative session, Engrossed Substitute House Bill 1079 was passed. This bill expanded the membership and duties of the 1058 Oversight Committee to include higher education in a continued effort to promote stability and achievement in all arenas of education.

The Education Consortium (members include Casey Family Programs; CA Region 4; Seattle Public Schools, Team Child; Treehouse; UW NW Institute for Children and Families)– created in April 2004, continues to proactively raise awareness of the needs of foster care students in the schools and to collaboratively promote their academic success through coordinated training, inter-systems communication and individually tailored social/academic planning and support for foster children in Seattle Public Elementary Schools.

(3) Help youth prepare for and enter post-secondary training and educational institutions

In 2001, former Governor Gary Locke instituted a golf tournament to raise funds for scholarships for foster youth to attend higher education institutions. This program is administered by the Washington Education Foundation. Governor's Scholarships were awarded to 25-30 foster youth this year. This program continues to work in concert with Washington State's Education and Training Voucher (ETV) program to identify youth bound for post-secondary education and help them with mentoring and financial assistance.

Contracted IL providers continue to prepare and mentor foster youth ages 16 to 18 to complete high school or a GED program, and enter post-secondary education programs. Many regions have instituted formal tutoring, educational advocacy, and homework assistance programs.

Building on these initiatives and opportunities, CA and other community stakeholders continue to work on a comprehensive effort to meet the post secondary education needs of youth from foster care. One such effort is the *Foster Care to College Partnership*. The intent of this partnership is to reach out to those youth who will be emancipating from foster care by helping them graduate from high school and attend college utilizing the scholarship aid that is currently available to them. Currently Foster Care to College Partners is seeking funding for this unique initiative.

(4) Provide personal and emotional support to youth through mentors and the promotion of interaction with dedicated adults

Contracted IL providers, foster parents, and community service providers have been successful in connecting youth with adults. The Foster Youth Transition to Independence Study, Final Report (Office of Children's Administration Research,

2004) interviewed 71% of pre-emancipation youth who had been in public child welfare foster care for at least 12 months. "Almost all of the youth (97%) report having a close positive relationship with at least one adult."

Mentoring of youth is a paid activity through contracted IL services. The assessment of IL needs and completion of the IL plan for all foster youth ages 16 to 18 is a requirement. The IL checklist is also required to be in every CA file prior to the date the youth is expected to exit from care. Youth centered personal and emotional support is facilitated through the use of the Ansell-Casey Life Skills Assessment (ACLSA) which was implemented in 2004.

The recipients of the Education and Training Vouchers also receive mentoring and support through their post-secondary programs. This is a formalized and contracted service.

(5) Provide financial, housing, counseling, employment and other appropriate support and services to former foster care recipients between 18 and 20 years of age

Services to former foster youth are delivered by contracted service providers. If contracted service agencies are not available, youth may still apply for transition funds through a local Children's Administration (CA) office. Contracted private agencies continue to develop partnerships with housing and employment agencies and help young people stay connected to supportive adults and peers. Contracted Transitional Living Programs provide the following services:

- Educational services, including basic literacy and computational skills training, either in local alternative public high schools or in a high school equivalency program that leads to obtaining a high school equivalency degree;
- Assistance in securing and maintaining safe and stable housing;
- Assistance and counseling related to obtaining vocational training or higher education, job readiness, job search assistance, and job placement programs;
- Counseling and instruction in life skills such as money management, home management, consumer skills, parenting, healthy marriages, health care, access to community resources, and transportation and housing options;
- Individual and group counseling;
- Networking with federal agencies and state and local organizations such as the United States Department of Labor, employment and training administration programs including the Workforce Investment Act which administers Workforce Development Councils, the Job Corps, Vocational rehabilitation, volunteer programs, and housing authorities.

Transitional Living programs are currently offered in every CA region.

(6) Make available vouchers for education and training, including postsecondary education, to youth who have aged out of foster care

Services to former foster care youth in Washington State are delivered via a contract for Education and Training Voucher services. Only IL contractors who provide Transitional Living Services (TLS) are allowed to have an Education and Training Voucher contract. This helps create a "continuum of care" for youth who enter a

<p>Access for Tribal Youth</p>	<p>provider's IL program and subsequently transition to the TL program. TLPs are already experts with youth ages 18-21 and have already established relationships with the youth who will take advantage of ETV services, which include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outreach, identification, eligibility determination of ETV recipients; • Helping youth fill out the ETV application, FAFSA application, and other financial aid applications; • Mentoring recipients of ETV, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Working with other agencies such as the Washington Education Foundation, the Orphan Foundation of America, the Washington State Higher Education Coordinating Board, and post-secondary institutions to identify additional resources for youth; ⇒ Helping youth to develop education and career plans; ⇒ Providing support for youth through their post-secondary education. • Tracking youth progress in their post-secondary program; • Submitting quarterly reports detailing demographic information, information about the use of ETV funds, and other tracking information to help better the ETV program. <p>Children's Administration currently has 10 ETV programs; at least one in each region of the state. CA also has a separate ETV program for all 29 federally recognized Tribes which are administered by the IL Program Manager. CA served approximately 180 youth this year through the ETV program. This year CA also received an application from a Tribal youth.</p> <p>Coordination between ETV contractors and the Washington Education Foundation, the Washington State Higher Education Coordinating Board, and other agencies continued to occur in an effort to enable former foster care youth to have access to the maximum amount of financial assistance (e.g., federal student financial aid programs, grants, scholarships, and ETV services).</p> <p>Tribal Participation</p> <p>Tribal youth are assured access and availability of Independent Living services across the state. Tribal youth may choose Tribal IL contracted services or non-tribal providers, assuming space availability. Moreover, once the Tribal youth ages out of foster care (18), s/he is eligible for Transitional Living Program Services (TLPS) across the state.</p> <p>Agreements with the Tribes regarding allocation of the Chafee Independent Living funds were reached in the year 2000. A solicitation process occurs each year where all federally recognized Tribes in Washington State are given an opportunity to apply for Chafee funding. Letters were sent to each Tribe offering an IL contract for this fiscal year. Applications were reviewed by tribal representatives and representatives from CA. To date, every Tribe that has requested Chafee funds for their own IL program has been approved for funding. This year CA has contracts with 19 tribes. Ten percent of the total IL allocation is designated for Tribal contracts.</p> <p>Outreach with the Tribes regarding IL/TL/ETV programs continues on a regular basis. Tribes are sent letters with an offer of technical assistance from the IL Program</p>
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Community Partnership	<p>Manager. The IL Program Manager also attends various other Tribal meetings to educate members about IL services. Several IL Coordinators in each of the regions also meet regularly with the Tribes and discuss IL issues and collaboration.</p> <p>Community Collaboration</p> <p>Community Collaboration continues to be a vital part of Children’s Administration’s (CA) efforts to strengthen its delivery of services to foster youth and the community as a whole. One such effort is the development of an Adolescent Workgroup which encompasses a variety of community agencies who convene to examine specific issues of importance to youth and young adults in Washington State. The group develops proposed policies and program planning documents that are then submitted to CA Management Team for authorization and, if approved, implementation. In the past year, the group has addressed issues pertaining to independent living skill development for adolescents, educational issues and adolescent safety, developed plans for a youth advisory board, and promoted family involvement in case planning at behavioral rehabilitation facilities.</p> <p>As a result of this Adolescent workgroup, Children’s Administration in collaboration with Casey Family Programs, Mockingbird Society and Washington Education Foundation developed a Statewide Youth Advisory Board named “Passion to Action” which consists of current and former recipients of CA services. This Board serves in an advisory function to provide input to CA on its policies and practices in efforts to provide better services to this targeted population.</p> <p>There continues to be many other collaborative efforts throughout the State in efforts to aid our current and former foster youth. Some of these efforts during FY 2005 were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Youth-In-Transition Planning Committee in Region 2 meets quarterly to discuss issues pertinent to current and former foster youth. • Treehouse, a private non-profit agency, serves foster youth by providing clothing and school supplies, funding for enrichment activities, summer camp, and in-school tutoring. • The YMCA Transitions program in Region 4 helps moderate-to-high functioning young adults, age 18-23, who are or have been in foster care with assistance in obtaining and maintaining stable housing and developing independent living skills. • The Young Adult Housing Task Force is a workgroup established to create housing linked with services for young adults, age 18-23, in King County exiting state care (foster care, juvenile justice system) with a felony or sexually deviant background. • Ready to Rent is a program of United Way’s Out of the Rain Homeless Initiative in partnership with Mutual Interest and the Rental Association of Puget Sound. • The Washington State Independent Living Coordinator and other CA staff are closely aligned with Casey Family Programs, the private foundation whose headquarters is in Seattle, Washington. Collaborative efforts between CA and Casey Family Programs occur at both the direct service level and the systems improvement level to help adolescents in foster care achieve self-sufficiency. • Youth Resources in Region 5 is aimed at developing community Resources for homeless youth, including foster youth. • The Transitional Collaborative Services in Region 4 consists of both public and private agencies who meet monthly to do resource sharing and identify gaps in
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<p>Medicaid</p> <p>Update on 5 year Strategic Plan</p>	<p>service to youth transitioning out of care.</p> <p>Washington State offers Medicaid to eligible youth, age 19 and under, provided they are attending school and on target to graduate. If a youth/young adult is identified with a developmental disability, they can receive Medicaid until age 21.</p> <p>During the Fiscal year 2004-2005 Children's Administration met most of the action items set forth in the Strategic Plan.</p> <p>Accomplishments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ The IL contracts were revised to include 3 different statements of work for Independent Living, Transitional Living and Educational and Training Vouchers. ⇒ Children's Administration established a statewide youth advisory board who named themselves "Passion to Action". This board is made up of 20 statewide current and former foster children, age 13- 24. They met in April, June, and August of 2005, and expect to meet quarterly now that the board is established. ⇒ Children's Administration established an Adolescent Workgroup to address issues pertaining to our current and former foster youth. ⇒ The Ansell Casey Life Skills Assessment (ACLSA) tool has been made part of practice in the service delivery to youth. This tool is being used to collect aggregate data. ⇒ Most staff and IL providers have been trained on the ACLSA tool. ⇒ IL mentoring services have been extended to youth ages 13-15. ⇒ Calendars and posters have been designed to promote the IL programs (through a collaborate effort with the Washington Education Foundation). ⇒ Children's Administration has created a state email address so youth may have one central point of inquiry for services. <p>The IL Program went through a transition in Program Managers resulting in some delays in some of the action items being implemented. The action items currently being implemented are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ IL contracts are being revised to be more outcomes based; ⇒ IL Program Manager is in process of creating an IL policy and procedures guidebook for all providers; ⇒ Children's Administration continues to assess ways to improve the quality of service to youth; ⇒ IL Program Manager is working on establishing IL providers meetings twice yearly.
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